

Message Text

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ACTION XMB-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-20 TRSE-00 OPIC-06
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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1758

UNCLAS MEXICO 12493

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BPRO, MX
SUBJECT: ACABADOS TEXTILES DE MEXICO, S.A. CALLE LUIS G.
SADA Y ELECTRICIDAD, SAN PEDRO XALOSTOC, EDO. DE MEXICO.

REF: STATE 174293

1. ON RECEIPT OF REFTEL, EMBASSY CONTACTED PRINCIPALS OF
SUBJECT FIRM TO INQUIRE ABOUT ALLEGED CONTRABAND
ACTIVITY. PRINCIPALS PROMPTLY VISITED EMBASSY AND TOLD
EMBOFFS THAT PRESS ACCOUNT (WHICH APPEARED ONLY ONCE,
AND IN ONLY ONE PAPER) ALLEGING CONTRABAND ACTIVITIES
WAS FALSE. ACCORDING TO RAYMUNDO COHEN FIS, ONE OF
PRINCIPALS IN COMPANY AND PERSON NAMED IN CONTRABAND PRESS
ACCOUNT, REPORTER WHO WROTE SINGLE PRESS ACCOUNT OF
ALLEGED CONTRABAND ACTIVITY ATTEMPTED TO EXTORT MONEY
FROM COHEN FAMILY IN RETURN FOR SUPRESSING STORY, BUT
COHEN FAMILY REFUSED TO PAY BLACKMAIL. COHEN TOLD
EMBOFFS THAT PROPERTY IN QUESTION (HOUSEHOLD AND OFFICE
FURNITURE) WAS PURCHASED FROM A SPANISH DIPLOMAT WHO,
UNKNOWN TO COHEN, DID NOT HAVE PERMISSION OF MEXICAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY TO SELL THESE EFFECTS. COHEN ALSO
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STATED THAT DURING OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED
CONTRABAND, HE TRIED TO GET SPANISH EMBASSY AND SPANISH
DIPLOMAT IN QUESTION TO APPEAR BEFORE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES
TO CONFIRM HIS ACCOUNT, BUT THAT SPANIARDS DECLINED TO
APPEAR. COHEN SAID THAT FOLLOWING OFFICIAL INQUIRY HE WAS
ALLOWED TO KEEP GOODS IN QUESTION (FREEZER, REFRIGERATOR
AND FURNITURE) AFTER PAYING MEXICAN IMPORT DUTIES AND

OTHER CHARGES.

2. FOLLOWING EMBASSY MEETING, RAYMUNDO COHEN AND OTHER PRINCIPALS IN ACABADOS TEXTILES DE MEXICO INVITED EMBOFF TO VISIT FIRM'S HEAD OFFICE AND PLANTS. EMBOFF ACCEPTED INVITATION, AND DURING VISIT TO HEAD OFFICE MET WITH OTHER PRINCIPALS. ACABADOS TEXTILES (WITH 369 EMPLOYEES, ANNUAL SALES OF 91.6 MILLION PESOS AND CAPITAL OF 40 MILLION PESOS) IS PART OF A GROUP OF CLOSELY-HELD CORPORATIONS OWNED BY MEMBERS OF THE COHEN FAMILY, WHO ARE PROMINENT IN THE MEXICAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY. THIS FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS WAS ORGANIZED BY TWO BROTHERS WHO ARRIVED IN MEXICO FROM TURKEY AROUND 1914. THE TWO BROTHERS REMAIN ACTIVE IN THE BUSINESS, AND TOGETHER WITH THEIR FIVE SONS OWN AND OPERATE THE VARIOUS COMPANIES MAKING UP THIS FAMILY ENTERPRISE. ASSOCIATED COMPANIES INCLUDE TELAS OXFORD, S. A. (WITH 826 EMPLOYEES), ANNUAL SALES OF 600 MILLION PESOS, AND CAPITAL OF 125 MILLION PESOS); AND BONFIL DE MEXICO, S. A. (211 EMPLOYEES, ANNUAL SALES OF 79 MILLION PESOS, AND CAPITAL OF 18 MILLION PESOS). GROUP ALSO OWNS A PUERTO RICAN COMPANY.

3. ACABADOS TEXTILES AND OTHER COMPANIES COMPRISING THIS GROUP APPEAR TO BE WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO VARIOUS US TEXTILE MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS. IN FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PROVIDED TO EMBASSY THEY LISTED AS US UNCLASSIFIED

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REFERENCES MRS. JOSEFINA C. HUNOLD OF CHASE MANHATTAN BANK. NEW YORK, N.Y., AND MR. GERALD SCHNEIDERMAN OF CHASE INTERNATIONAL BANKING, MIAMI, FLORIDA.

4. DURING MEETING AT GROUP'S HEAD OFFICE, WHEN EMBOFF INFORMED PRINCIPALS THIS INQUIRY WAS BEING MADE AT REQUEST OF EXIMBANK, PRINCIPALS EXTENDED INVITATION TO EXIMBANK OFFICIALS TO MEET WITH THEM DURING NEXT EXIMBANK VISIT TO MEXICO. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS EXIMBANK ACCEPT THIS INVITATION.

5. APART FROM STATEMENT BY RAYMUNDO COHEN IN PARAGRAPH 1 ABOVE, WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY, EMBASSY UNABLE TO SHED ANY ADDITIONAL LIGHT ON SINGLE PRESS ACCOUNT OF ALLEGED CONTRABAND ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, EMBOFF WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH PRINCIPALS' FRANKNESS AND OPENNESS DURING THE TWO MEETINGS DESCRIBED ABOVE, AS WELL AS DURING THE PLANT VISITS. THEIR COMPANIES APPEAR TO BE WELL RUN AND HIGHLY REGARDED IN THE MEXICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

6. EMBASSY SUBMITTING REVISED WTDR ON ACABADOS TEXTILES,

DELETING MENTION OF ALLEGED CONTRABAND ACTIVITY.
LUCEY

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 02 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Review Release Date: N/A
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